

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 24-45 were previously pending in the application. New Claims 46-54 are presented herein for consideration. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for courtesy extended during the interview on December 21, 2004. During the interview, the Examiner indicated that the claims differentiate over the prior art currently of record. A copy of the Interview Summary is attached hereto. The language proposed by the Examiner during the interview is presented herein in new Claims 46-48 and 52-54.

Applicant notes that the Examiner crossed out the PCT Search Report on the PTO-1449 form. Applicant has attached hereto another PTO-1449 and a copy of the PCT Search. Applicant would like the Examiner to sign off on the reference or state why the Examiner is unwilling to do so.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 24 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsui et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,115,266). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites an output sensor that generates a digital sense signal to indicate within which of at least three reference ranges the regulated output is included and a digital controller, responsive to the digital sense signal, that alters a drive signal to control the regulated output.

As best understood by Applicant, Matsui et al. fails to show, teach or suggest an output sensor or a digital controller as set forth in the preceding paragraph. Rather, Matsui et al. senses current with sensor 60 and generates a drive signal using a digital control 70 based on the sensed current. Matsui et al. does not generate a digital sense signal based a comparison of the regulated output to at least three reference ranges. Matsui et al does not perform any similar ranging activity.

The Examiner's assertion that Applicant has merely duplicated a claim element is misplaced. Applicant's invention does not require three output sensors or digital controllers. Rather, Claim 1 recites one or more output sensors that compare the regulated output to at least three reference ranges and generates a digital sense signal based on the comparison. For the foregoing reasons, Applicant believes that Claim 1 is allowable over the prior art currently of record.

Claim 24 includes generating a digital sense signal to indicate within which of at least three reference ranges the regulated output is included and generating a drive signal, in response to the digital sense signal, to control the regulated output. Claim 35 includes means for generating a digital sense signal to indicate within which of at least three reference ranges the regulated output is included and means for generating a drive signal, in response to the digital sense signal, to control the regulated output. Therefore, Claims 24 and 35 are allowable over the prior art of record for at least similar reasons as Claim 1.

Claims 2-12, 25-34, 36-45 and 46-51 are directly or indirectly dependent upon Claims 1, 24 and 35 and are allowable over the prior art currently of record for at least similar reasons.

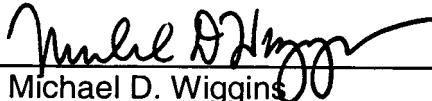
New Claims 52-54 are believed to be allowable over the prior art currently of record for at least similar reasons as those set forth above.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 1/17/05

By: 
Michael D. Wiggins
Reg. No. 34,754

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600